

GROSSE POINTE



VOTER

Serving the Communities of
Grosse Pointe, Grosse Pointe Farms, Grosse Pointe Park, Grosse Pointe Shores,
Grosse Pointe Woods, and Harper Woods

2012

In This Issue...

[GP Library Millage](#)

[Sunshine Report](#)

[Your Government Officials](#)

[Annual Meeting](#)

[New Membership Directory](#)

[Clean Air Promise](#)

[Town Hall: Emergency
Financial Manager Law](#)

[Detroit/Regional Water
System](#)

[Presidential Primary](#)

[Redistricting Consensus](#)

[2012 Program Calendar](#)

Library Millage



The Library Board and Management have proactively worked to cut costs while maintaining basic services... However, in spite of the aggressive efforts, there is not enough savings to make up for the lost revenues caused by the recession. The Board is forced to ask for a temporary makeup millage to help maintain basic services: a

February/March

From the Prez...

The National Program Planning meeting at the Chinese Dinner was well attended with enthusiastic participation. The process was a little different this year, in that LWWUS wanted specific feedback on their current positions if local leagues wanted to encourage review, new or concurrent studies updated. Four groups reviewed the positions assigned to them with satisfaction on many of the positions it terms of content. Many members wanted to encourage more advocacy.

The group that reviewed the social positions not only reviewed and discussed all, but have decided to encourage LWWUS to review Child Care and Early Intervention for Children at Risk. This requires more than just a nod to National. It requires a statement of the focus for review, the scope, parameters and resources to be devoted to the process from local and national levels that include volunteer time and finances. To that end, a committee has been formed and they include Wilhelmina Giblin, Martha Shumaker, Jan Wells and a new member, Deb Weatherston. All members have extensive background in child care career-wise as well as with family. They will be formulating the position and recommendation for national to review. (If you wish to participate, let me know very soon!)

In the vein of program positions. LWVMI has prepared the consensus questions for the Redistricting study. We have had a couple of meetings on the topic (Hot Topics in April of 2011 and the Kick-Off meeting in September 2011); therefore we should be well prepared to answer the questions. The consensus meeting is scheduled for Saturday, 31 March from noon til 3:00 at the City Kitchen restaurant in the Village (lower level.) We thought we would try a new type meeting and time slot to encourage member participation. Lunch will be ordered off the menu. Attached to this newsletter are the consensus questions for your review. We will provide additional information in the March Voter. (Please see the updated program calendar.)

Please see articles about our town hall meeting providing sound information about the Emergency Manger law and the practical application. This meeting is for membership and the community. It is Thursday, 16 February, 7:00 pm at the Grosse Pointe Woods City Council Chambers. Speakers will be Eva Packard representing LWVMI, John Mock and John Axe, attorneys and professors from Wayne State University. The timing for this information seems particularly appropriate.

In league,
Christina Schlitt

Emergency Financial Manager Law

The League of Women Voters of Grosse Pointe
Town Hall Meeting Thursday, February 16,
7 p.m., Grosse Pointe Woods Council Chambers

levy up to 0.7 mills for a period of 8 years. The cost to an owner of a \$150,000 market value home is \$52.50 per year. The alternative to a temporary millage is a drastic reduction in Library service which may include cutting hours or services or closing a branch. For more details, go to their web site.

**VOTE YES on Feb. 28
for GP Library Millage**

Website:
VoteYesGPLibraryMillage.org

Facebook:
VoteYesGPLibraryMillage

Twitter:
@GPLibMillage

Sunshine Report

Sunshine Week, held the week of James Madison's birthday (March 16), is a nationwide effort to open up dialogue on the importance of transparency in government and freedom of information. The initiative originated from the work of several newspapers, and it has grown, in large part, because of the media's continued support.

During this week, the League of Women Voters and other members of the Sunshine Week coalition encourage citizens to play an active role in promoting open government at all levels.

One way that LWV has promoted transparency in government is by speaking out against the Supreme Court's 2010 Citizens United ruling. The Court ruled that the first Amendment prohibits government from limiting corporations' and unions' independent spending for political purposes. LWV opposes the ruling because it has given rise to Super PACs, which tend to obfuscate the identities of the individuals behind the PACs and their political messages.

On a related note, LWV has

To date, seven Michigan communities, and the Detroit Schools, have had emergency financial managers. In March of 2011, the state legislature passed a new law, which has both proponents and critics. This LWVGP Town Meeting will provide an overview of the EFM Law, and opposing viewpoints on its legality, followed by a question and answer period.

John Mogk, a Professor of Law at Wayne State University, will speak in favor of the law and its constitutionality. John Axe, Permanent Adjunct Faculty of the Wayne State University Law School where he teaches public finance will speak to the application of the law from his experiences in Hamtramck, Ecorse and Pontiac. Eva Packard, Voter Services Vice President, LWVMI, will speak to the lack of voter representation due to the application of the law.

This meeting is an opportunity for all members of LWV GP, and voters in the Grosse Pointes and Harper Woods, to become more familiar with this law and the arguments for and against the EFM.

For more information, call the League of Women Voters of Grosse Pointe at 313.881.6343.

Detroit/Regional Water System

Inside peek at our Detroit/Regional Water Delivery System

LWV of Detroit Metro Area (DMA) hosted a program about the past, present, and several possible futures of the Detroit/Regional Water Delivery System on February 4th.

A clear overview of the current system was given by Mary Alfonso, public affairs manager of the system. It serves 4 million people in 126 communities, most of them with both water and also sewage removal.

Chuck Hersey, SEMCOG's manager of environmental programs and leader of planning and policy, then gave the big picture.

Chuck suggested that the future "desired outcome" of the system, which is a public service, is to meet area demand, be fiscally sustainable, and support the region's economy. Unfortunately, this "supply" picture is on a collision course with our area's needs. Preliminary goal: Estimate future demand.

First, current revenue is not able to meet infrastructure needs. Our area's median household income is way down (38th out 50 states)

Second, more revenue requires more consumption. But state and national policies require conservation, which people value. Our service expectations are high, but cost reduction requires a cooperative effort to look at choices and alternatives for the future, in coordination with many area agencies.

Chuck emphasized transparency, especially fiscal, with and within local cities getting service, mentioning examples of needing it. Clearly much preliminary discussion has been held. Some "takeaway" figures and facts:

- The status quo increases costs of a deteriorating system that can't be supported by our economy.
- Detroit pays 83% of costs; all other entities together pay 17%.
- Detroit's number of uncollectable bills is doubling.
- Many parts of the system are built for many more customers than it has.
- We can make the case to conserve water, downsize system, and perhaps the use of land as well as water.

He said "We CAN change, and must continue to" probe, debate options, come to clear agreements: Make it a "Zero sum game" in which no one loses. Everybody wins.

Water Quality was explored by Prof. Chuanwu Xi, microbiologist at the University of Michigan School, Public Health. He carefully explained the analysis of such questions as pharmaceuticals in drinking water, with questions like "At what stage should the system be changed to protect humans' drinking water from them?" E.g. closest to the manufacturer of the strange substance? Does our non-drinking water need as much protection? How much more does our drinking water need? Can we prove it? ([Read More...](#))

Presidential Primary

Be Sure to Vote in the Presidential Primary on February 28th!

recently helped gather 25,000 signatures on a Petition requesting that President Obama nominate new commissioners to the Federal Election Commission (FEC). LWV asserts that the FEC - the agency charged with enforcing election laws - is dysfunctional. Three of the six commissioners staunchly refuse to enforce the law and five of the six are serving despite expired terms.

Your Government Officials Brochures

The updated brochure is ready for distribution throughout our community. Some have already been delivered and some we will ask your help to finish the deliveries. Sharon Riley, Vice President of Voter Services has the 7000 copies of "Your Government Officials" organized and labeled for members to take at the Chinese Dinner and distribute accordingly.

A special thank you to Jim O'Dell of Pointe Printing (the corner of Lakepointe and Kercheval in the Park) for assisting and Don Dungan in the preparation of the 2012 brochure. He helped with verifications of data as well as printing. Jim has been a long-time partner in this project.

Board of Directors Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 14 7:00pm

Central Library
10 Kercheval Ave
Grosse Pointe Farms,
MI 48236

All members are

On February 28th, citizens of Michigan will have the opportunity to cast a vote in the presidential primary. At the time of this writing, President Barack Obama is running unopposed on the Democratic ticket while the competition continues among seven Republican candidates.

Sample ballots are available at: <http://www.gpwmi.us/departments/cityClerkElections.html>

Importantly, citizens of the Grosse Pointes will also decide whether to support a millage increase to help fund our three libraries. Voters must answer the question:

"Shall the limitation on the amount of taxes which may be imposed on taxable property in the Grosse Pointe Public Library District, County of Wayne, Michigan, be increased by 0.70 mills (\$0.70 per \$1,000 of taxable value), for a period of eight (8) years, 2012 to 2019, inclusive, to provide funds for library purposes? If approved and levied in its entirety in 2012, the millage would raise an estimated \$1,820,245 for the Grosse Pointe Public Library."

Historically, only 15-20% of eligible Michigan voters have participated in our presidential primaries. Remember, your opinion won't be counted if you don't cast a vote!

Thanks!!
Susan Leithauser

REDISTRICTING CONSENSUS

REDISTRICTING CONSENSUS - BACKGROUND MATERIAL

Although the Michigan maps have been drawn and we must accept them, the redistricting issue is still very much alive. We cannot afford to wait until the 2021 cycle is at hand before we advocate for reform. The Michigan Redistricting Collaborative, of which LWVMI is a member, was instrumental in educating the public about the many problems with the system in 2011 and is prepared to continue reform efforts. They look forward to the completion of this study and anticipate that our position will be a significant help as they draft a reform proposal and that we will be active in a campaign to achieve our goals.

I. History

Starting with the premise that redistricting is critical to a representative democracy, the problem with the redistricting process in Michigan is that the current system gives control to the political entities in power. They can freely base decisions solely upon a political party's political interests. This has resulted in a lack of openness, citizen participation or fairness that the LWVMI could and did address under the LWVUS position paper. Partisanship and self-serving result in distorted plans produced by the majority parties in the legislature - past and present - evidence that the entire process should be reformed.

MI Public Act 221 of 1999, Congressional Redistricting Act, established guidelines for drawing Michigan's congressional districts. The guidelines comprise provisions for strict population equity, upholding the Voting Rights Act, preserving political boundaries, contiguity, compactness, single-member districts, and numbering districts. Likewise P.A. 463 of 1996 established guidelines for drawing Michigan's legislative districts and conferred jurisdiction on the Michigan Supreme Court to review redistricting plans for compliance with those guidelines, which comprise provisions for a maximum 10 percent total population variance (from maximum to minimum), upholding precedents related to the Voting Rights Act, preserving political boundaries, contiguity, compactness, and single-member districts. However, these provisions do not bind the state legislature because with gubernatorial approval, it can change state statutes. When the state legislature approves a redistricting plan, a different legislature can pass a new statute that supersedes the old one. In 2011, there was no legislation describing the criteria used by the legislature. The actual maps are now available on the Secretary of State's site at...

[\(Read more\)](#)

Click for [REDISTRICTING CONSENSUS QUESTIONS](#)

Program Calendar 2012

Thursday, 16 February 2012 at Woods City
Grosse Pointe
Vicki Granger

Emergency
Financial
Manager

welcome!	7:00 pm	Council Chambers		Law/Meeting
<p>Save the Date! Annual Breakfast Meeting</p> <p>SATURDAY, MAY 5, 2012 LOCHMOOR CLUB, GROSSE POINTE WOODS</p> <p>The featured speaker will be Susan Smith, President of the League of Women Voters Michigan. She will talk about LWV advocacy efforts based on positions at all League levels.</p> <p>Complete information and a reservation form will be included in the next newsletter.</p>	Tuesday, 28 February, 7:00 am-8:00pm	Local Polling Location	www.grossepointe.mi.lwvnet.org	Primary Election/Library Millage
	Wednesday, 14 March 2012-7:00-8:30pm	Central Library	Christina Schlitt	LWVGP Board Meeting
	Saturday, 31 March 2012, Noon til 3:00	City Kitchen, Lower Level, 16844 Kercheval in the Village	Susan Leithauser-Yee	Resdistricting Consensus-LWVMI Position
	Wednesday, 11 April 2010-7:00-8:30pm	Central Library	Christina Schlitt	LWVGP Board Meeting
<p>YOUR NEW MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY</p> <p>All members should have their new Directory, bright pink and dated January 2012. Attached was a note asking everyone to check their contact information in the Directory and let Martha Shumaker know if there is an error. If you have not done that, please do so asap.</p> <p>To date, I apologize for the following corrections which should be noted:</p> <p>Cheryl Costantino's name was misspelled. Her corrected e-mail address is ccostantino@ulapsa.org</p> <p>Patricia Gotham's email is patriciagotham@att.net</p> <p>Marion McCarthy's zip code is 55116</p> <p>Added to the "Donors" page listing people who contributed \$100 to the League in 2011 through November should be:</p> <p>Alice & Ray Galinski Mary Zahler</p> <p>Additionally, please note that:</p> <p>This time of year is a particularly good one to think about PROSPECTS. There</p>	April, 2012	TBD	JudyMorlan/Fran Schoenenberg	Environmental: It's not easy being green!"
	Saturday, 5 May, 2012	Lochmoor Country Club	Jan Wells/Christina Schlitt/Peggy Hickey	Annual Meeting (Business Meeting 3 of 3)
	June, 2012	TBD	Christina Schlitt	Joint Board Meeting
	8-12 June, 2012	Washington, D.C.	Christina Schlitt	LWVUS National Convention
<p>LWVMI focus on:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Redistricting/new study, 2. Convienent Voting, 3. Fair and Impartial Courts 				

*Revised February 2012

are several outstanding programs this winter to which you might ask a friend or neighbor. Remember if someone joins the League at this time of year, their dues are good for the next League year as well. That's a real bonus and a good reason to THINK PROSPECTS now!

Please email (jkelly764@sbcglobal.net) or call (313/910-1909) me with the names and addresses of anyone to whom you would like me to send information about the League. Together we can build Membership and make our League more effective.

Jo Ann. Kelly
Membership Director

The Clean Air Promise

The Clean Air Promise campaign is a national effort to protect children and families from dangerous air pollution by obtaining commitments from our leaders to safeguard the Clean Air Act and the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) enforcement authority.

Go to [The Clean Air Promise](#) and show your support for clean air and public health!

League Links

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[LWV Michigan](#)

[LWV United States](#)

View our videos on 

[Forward email](#)





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League of Women Voters Grosse Pointe | 32 Lake Shore Drive | Grosse Pointe Farms | MI | 48236

